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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. von WAGNER (Germany)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF ALL DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS (continued) (A/C.1/48/L.6, L.14, L.18 and L.33)

Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.6

1. Mr. DANGUE REWAKA (Gabon), speaking as representative of the country which chaired the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, introduced on behalf of the sponsors the draft resolution entitled "Regional confidence-building measures" relating to item 72 (e). The text of the draft was similar to that of General Assembly resolution 47/53 F, with the exception of paragraphs 4 and 5, which raised new issues.

2. In submitting the draft resolution, the States members of the Economic Community of Central African States reaffirmed their readiness to encourage disarmament and non-proliferation in the subregion and their confidence in the benefits of preventive diplomacy. It was hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.18

3. Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands) introduced on behalf of the sponsors the draft resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments" relating to item 71 (g). The general intent of the draft resolution was to sustain the momentum towards the political objective set by the General Assembly with regard to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. He welcomed the broad support expressed during consultations held in connection with the text of the draft resolution for the aims and objectives of the transparency initiative.

4. Mr. NEAGU (Romania) said that his delegation endorsed the draft resolution introduced by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, as it had supported from the outset all efforts aimed at transparency. It also welcomed the measures introduced by the Secretary-General with the aim of strengthening the Centre for Disarmament as well as the initial reaction by States to the establishment of the Arms Register.

5. It would be unrealistic to hope for total transparency on all aspects of armaments. Arms control and disarmament, including transparency, was bound to be a gradual process leading to the establishment of a comprehensive information system on conventional weapons and, perhaps, on armaments in general. In fact, there should be no limit to military confidence-building, as a process which would bring greater security and enhance the prospects for international peace. In the meantime, such confidence-building measures should lead to the adoption of agreements on arms limitation and disarmament. His delegation was therefore greatly concerned by the continuing transfers of sophisticated weapon systems, particularly in areas of tension or conflict.

6. Transparency in armaments was one of the new priority issues in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, which was the most appropriate forum to deal with the matter. Romania was ready to participate actively in the work aimed at

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

consolidating the Register and expanding its scope. It was clear that the excessive accumulation of armaments posed a threat to peace and security at all levels and exacerbated tensions and situations of conflict. He therefore supported the proposals by France and the United States to establish an international data exchange on the seven main categories of military holdings and procurement through national production. The general aspects relating to transparency in armaments could be regulated by setting standards and procedures and by establishing an appropriate mechanism for their implementation. In that regard, Romania advocated the drafting of agreed guidelines that would serve as an international code of conduct and constitute a first step in that direction.

Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.14

7. Mrs. LAOSE-AJAYI (Nigeria) introduced on behalf of the sponsors the draft resolution entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme" concerning item 72 (a).

8. The changes which had taken place in the international arena over the past few years had opened up new opportunities for pursuing disarmament, but at the same time presented new challenges for the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme had been extended to include new topics such as non-proliferation, openness and transparency, and conflict resolution. The draft resolution was essentially the same as in previous years and so it was hoped that it would be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.33

9. Mr. TOTH (Hungary), introducing the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction", submitted under item 61, said that the Convention was the first multilateral agreement on the elimination of such weapons. As Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to Identify and Examine Possible Verification Measures from a Scientific and Technical Standpoint, he took the opportunity to introduce the report which the Group had adopted by consensus. At the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention it had been decided that a conference would be convened to examine the report if the majority of States parties submitted proposals along those lines to the depositary Governments. It was his understanding that almost 40 countries had already requested the convening of such a conference, hence the request in the draft resolution that the Secretary-General should provide the depositary Governments with the necessary assistance in that connection.

10. During the Third Review Conference the Secretary-General had been requested to provide the former Department of Disarmament Affairs with the staff required to ensure implementation of the relevant decisions of the Conference. It was hoped that the Secretary-General would make the necessary resources available so as to comply with that request.

(Mr. Toth, Hungary)

11. It had also been agreed at the Third Review Conference that the States parties should honour their commitment to implement a package of confidence-building measures, with a view to eliminating any ambiguities of doubts and improving cooperation on peaceful bacteriological activities. Although the number of countries that had submitted information under the Final Declaration of the Conference had increased, it still represented less than a third of the States parties, and so the draft resolution called for their participation in the exchange of information.

12. In view of the important role of the Biological Weapons Convention and the large number of countries which had signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the biological weapons regime should be strengthened through the ratification of or accession to the Convention by more States, as requested in paragraph 6 of the draft resolution. Given the importance of the issues raised in the draft resolution, it was hoped that it would receive the broadest possible support on the part of delegations.

13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the draft resolutions should be grouped according to subject-matter in order to facilitate their adoption and urged those delegations which were sponsors to do their utmost to consolidate draft resolutions on similar topics.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.